

see for themselves. I have been there and stood in them. They are, in fact, 100 percent real.

This is a dilemma for Israel. They want to improve civilian life in Gaza by letting these important materials pass through its blockade, but they also know their enemies will steal these materials and try to harm Israelis.

The violence that began last week came as a result of protests regarding an ongoing Israeli court order to evict Palestinian families from the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, who is serving his 16th year of what is supposed to be a 4-year term, Mr. Speaker, called for unrest in the streets. Not to be outdone, Hamas and the PIJ recognized a political opportunity to assume the mantle as protectors of all Palestinian people.

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These terrorist groups responded by guttlessly and indiscriminately firing over 3,000 missiles since last Monday at hospitals, schools, and other civilian population centers across central and southern Israel.

Thankfully, the United States provides Israel with generous military assistance for the Iron Dome and other missile defenses. This system has intercepted 90 percent of the missiles. However, there have been 10 Israelis killed, including two children.

Israel has the right to defend itself from unprovoked terrorist attacks from Hamas, PIJ, and anybody else. The Israelis responded forcefully, actively trying to limit civilian casualties by calling residents in targeted buildings and deploying “knock on the roof” warnings. This is a courtesy that terror groups like Hamas and PIJ do not and will never return.

Without these important measures, Mr. Speaker, hundreds more Palestinian civilians would be dead because Hamas and PIJ use commercial and residential buildings to house their military operations and ammunition depots. This disgusting tactic is the reason why the Palestinian death toll is higher and why the lives of dozens of innocent Palestinian children have been lost.

These terror groups are more than willing to use their own people as human shields for the sake of vilifying Israel. Unfortunately, the most radical Members of Congress and the American mainstream media have bought this narrative hook, line, and sinker, Mr. Speaker.

Hamas and the PIJ are no friends of ours and want the same fate for Israel that so many terrorists want for the United States: the complete and total destruction of democracy.

If you are going to blame Israel alone for the recent violence, you are being nothing more than a useful idiot and a publicity tool for the two terrorist organizations.

RECOGNIZING TERI TOPPING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I have the privilege of recognizing one of the millions of hardworking, taxpaying Americans who form the foundation of our Nation's economy through their employment in small business—in this particular case, the healthcare industry.

Mrs. Teri Topping of Elkins, West Virginia, has served her patients exceptionally well throughout her distinguished career as an orthopedic nurse manager.

As a result, Mrs. Topping is beloved by her community for the conscientious care that she has provided to those in need. Her outstanding performance has helped her local hospital, the Davis Memorial Hospital in Elkins, West Virginia, become one of the best hospitals for joint care in the entire Mountain State.

It is hardly surprising that Mrs. Topping's patients illustrated their deep appreciation for her incredible efforts when the Inter-Mountain's 2021 People's Choice Awards opened balloting to the public. In a heartwarming display, those graced by Mrs. Topping's skill and dedication voted in droves to grant her this year's award for Best Nurse. This tremendous honor is well deserved.

I extend my thanks and congratulations to Nurse Topping for her phenomenal service to the people of West Virginia. I encourage everyone, especially young nurses, to follow her extraordinary example.

Teri Topping and her husband, Ret Topping, are the mother and father of three beautiful daughters. They also are grandparents. They have their first grandchild, fortunately, living nearby them in West Virginia. I consider them personal friends, and they are pillars of the community.

Congratulations to Nurse Teri Topping for her Nurse of the Year award.

HELP FOR VETERANS FACING STRUGGLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. CAWTHORN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAWTHORN. Mr. Speaker, for eight generations, my family has lived in the mountains of western North Carolina. Many of my family members have served in our Armed Forces. I grew up surrounded by men of courage and patriotism who dedicated their lives and their honor in defense of this American Republic.

I understand, as much as one can without serving, the struggle a veteran faces attempting to reacclimate to civilian life. It is incumbent on the American people to work hand in hand with our veterans and streamline their transition back into the workforce.

To that end, I urge support for H.R. 2167, the GI Bill National Emergency Extended Deadline Act. Included in this larger piece of legislation is a program that I am proud to advocate for.

My language in this bill authorizes a pilot program to allow States to use grants or contracts to carry out short-term fellowship programs for unemployed veterans. This program is not some revolutionary concept, but what it does is build off the successes of other pilot programs in the veteran community.

This program would authorize DOL VETS to carry out a pilot program similar to fellowship programs created by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation to allow States to use grants or contracts to carry out a short-term fellowship program.

After the participating States have been selected by the DOL, each State would enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization to carry out the short-term fellowship program. Participants would be provided a small stipend while they are participating in the program.

This program prioritizes veterans and opens up new and unique pathways toward employment. This new fellowship program will build upon the successes of other fellowship programs across the country, and I am confident that it will empower unemployed veterans to find meaningful work in the post-COVID economy.

The benefits of this program are numerous. It will give eligible veterans the ability to gain on-the-job experience in a field of their interest while earning a monthly stipend.

I will always fight for the veteran community in NC-11, and this program is a bipartisan measure that puts veterans first.

One of the foundational attributes of Americanism is our sense of brotherhood. Those who sacrifice for the good of this Nation are not simply a resource to be utilized and then cast aside. These are our heroes, and they deserve much more than what our Nation currently provides them.

When I left my mountain home to come to Washington, I promised the veterans in our district that I would be their weapon in Washington, D.C. I will never abandon those who sacrificed their lives and livelihoods in defense of our freedoms.

For too long, we have cast our veterans, these guardians of our Republic, by the wayside and derided their sacrifice. Never forget, America is the land of the free because of the brave. Together, we can show these men and women who dedicated their lives to us that we will not turn our backs on them.

Join me in supporting the new veterans fellowship program, and let's take a firm step toward supporting our veterans. I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 2167, the National Emergency Extended Deadline Act.